

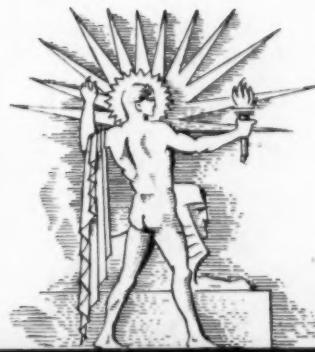
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SCIENCE NEWS LETTER

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THE WEEKLY SUMMARY OF CURRENT SCIENCE •



April 22, 1939

Deluge in the Desert

See Page 244

A SCIENCE SERVICE PUBLICATION

Do You Know?

Ostriches can only kick forward.

A new lightweight, folding anchor made of monel metal has been devised.

An albino skunk and an albino porcupine can be seen at Wisconsin's State fur farm.

A bronze statue near Middlebury, Vt., honors a horse, progenitor of the Morgan breed.

Weather-proof mirrors have been devised for use in astronomical and optical measuring instruments.

A folder on food for children of all ages over one year has been prepared by the U. S. Children's Bureau.

To aid in combating fur racketeers, a method of identifying beaver bloodstains has been evolved at the University of Minnesota.

A Navy Yard Commandant states that about 85 per cent of the cost of every ship, regardless of size or type, goes to labor.

A case of anthrax infection in minks has been reported by a St. Louis physician, who warns that fur farmers should take precautions.

X-rays used in inspecting industrial goods range in penetrating power from soft 5,000 volt rays, used in examining asbestos cloth, to 600,000 volt rays that penetrate five inches of steel.

SCIENCE NEWS LETTER

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NEW BOOKS ON SCIENCE—SPRING 1939

This issue contains Science Service's semi-annual comprehensive bibliography of current books in various scientific fields. It lists those published or promised during the first half of this year. Books are intelligent companions for recreation or useful tools for research. Books like those in this list will make exceptional gifts. SCIENCE NEWS LETTER will obtain for you any American book or magazine in print. Send check or money order to cover regular retail price (\$5 if price is unknown, change to be remitted) and we will pay postage in the United States. When publications are free, send 10c for handling. Address: Book Department, SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, 2101 Constitution Ave., Washington, D. C.

Glass cooking dishes transmit heat faster than other kinds.

Plants well nourished with the soil elements they need can better resist disease and insect pests.

A television studio in Italy is near completion, and 50 transmitting stations are to be installed this year.

The Pilgrims used to freeze succotash, which they made by Indian directions, and they would chop off a chunk as needed for cooking.

Linters, the tiny tufts of cotton left clinging to cotton seeds after ginning, are used in 36 products, from guncotton and smokeless powder to cushions, horse collars, and films.

Calling tularemia "rabbit fever" is considered unfair to domestic rabbits, since the infection is not caught from them but from wild rabbits and certain other mammals and insects.

Zines and other publications are invited to avail themselves of the numerous syndicate services issued by Science Service.

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Ordinarily it takes a cataract of the eye five to ten years to reach its mature stage.

Federal chemists have discovered that lignin from corn cobs effectively removes iron from hard water.

A population study shows that in 28 leading countries the largest city is more than twice as large as the next in rank.

Pamphlets on growing 14 different medicinal herbs are being prepared for public use by WPA workers in New York.

The aristocratic Borzoi dog of Russia was the result of crossing Saluki hounds of the Near East with collie-like Russian dogs.

The rare Chinella orchid has petals four inches long on opening, but they grow about two inches a day, drooping like streamers until they may become 30 inches long.

Academy of Sciences, W. H. Howell, Vice-President and Chairman of Executive Committee, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Md.; R. A. Millikan, Director, Norman Bridge Laboratory of Physics, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, Calif. Harlow Shapley, Director, Harvard College Observatory, Cambridge, Mass. Representing National Research Council, C. G. Abbot, Secretary, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.; Harrison E. Howe, Editor of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry, Washington, D. C.; Ross G. Harrison, Director, Osborn Zoological Laboratory, Yale University, New Haven, Conn. Representing Journalistic Profession, John H. Finley, Editor, New York Times; J. Edwin Murphy, Managing Editor, Baltimore Evening Sun, Baltimore, Md.; O. W. Riegel, Director, Lee School of Journalism, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Va. Representing E. W. Scripps Estate, Harry L. Smithson, Treasurer, Cincinnati, Ohio; Warren S. Thompson, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio.

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MEDICINE

Vitamin C May Be Cure and Preventive of Lead Poisoning

Oranges and Cabbages May Aid Disease That Affects 1,000,000 or More American Industrial Workers

VITAMIN C, from oranges, cabbages and other fruits and vegetables, may be both the long-sought cure and preventive of lead poisoning, industrial disease which threatens 1,000,000 or more American workers.

Apparent cures by the vitamin treatment of a score of patients suffering with chronic lead poisoning have been achieved by Prof. Harry N. Holmes and Dr. Edward J. Amberg and Kathryn Campbell, of Oberlin College (*Science*, April 7).

Spongy, bleeding gums of workers exposed to lead hazard gave the scientists their first clue to the new vitamin C treatment. Scurvy caused bad gums, also. Vitamin C cures and prevents scurvy. Therefore they used vitamin C in treating lead poisoning. It worked.

Four house-painters who had used the treatment unknowingly for years were discovered later by Dr. Holmes and his colleagues. By eating a diet unusually rich in this vitamin, they had apparently protected themselves from lead poisoning for years. Here was unexpected long time confirmation of the discovery.

Half of a group of 34 patients showing lead poisoning were given daily 100 mg of synthetic vitamin C in tablet form, but no extra calcium, for several weeks. With practically all of them, the Oberlin scientists report, there was a marked gain in vigor, color of skin, cheerfulness, blood picture, appetite and ability to sleep well. The other half of the group continued their previous treatment with calcium gluconate to drive toxic lead into the bones and supplemented this with 100 mg. of vitamin C daily.

"They gained in health, but not so well as the 17 men given vitamin C alone," Dr. Holmes and associates report.

"The conclusion, supported by test tube experiments," the scientists state, "is that vitamin C reacts with toxic lead ions to form a poorly ionized and much less toxic compound. Therefore lead destroys this vitamin, so necessary to buoyant health, while generous vitamin C supplements to the diet remove the lead from the field of action."

Men exposed to the lead hazard are

advised to include in their diet plenty of such rich sources of vitamin C as tomatoes (fresh or canned), raw cabbage, oranges or grapefruit, raw spinach (or even cooked, in very little water), raw turnips, green peppers and cantaloupe. Or they may take 50 milligrams in a vitamin C tablet as an addition to the diet.

Science News Letter, April 22, 1939

MEDICINE

Sulfapyridine Shortens Pneumonia in Children

THE NEW drug sulfapyridine apparently shortens the course of pneumonia by three or four days when used in treating infants and children.

Six Cincinnati physicians report on the effect of the drug on the pneumonias of infancy and childhood after a trial period at the Children's and the Cincinnati General Hospitals, Cincinnati (*Journal, American Medical Association*, April 15).

Of 70 small pneumonia patients, half were given sulfapyridine and the others were used as controls. It was demonstrated that the fall in temperature and the clinical recovery were significantly earlier in the sulfapyridine group than in the control group.

The optimum dosage needs further study, and the series of cases was too small to permit an evaluation of the effects of sulfapyridine in preventing the complications of pneumonia, according to the six authors of the article.

They are: Drs. Armine T. Wilson, Arthur H. Spreen, Merlin L. Cooper, Frank E. Stevenson, A. Graeme Mitchell and Glenn E. Cullen.

Science News Letter, April 22, 1939

CHEMISTRY

Synthesis of Vitamin B₆ Accomplished in Laboratory

VITAMIN B₆ has now been completely synthesized in the chemical laboratory, Drs. Stanton A. Harris and Karl Folkers, of Merck and Company's Research Laboratories, report (*Science*).

The vitamin which Drs. Harris and Folkers have built up from chemicals occurs naturally in yeast, rice polish and other whole grains, liver and certain other foodstuffs. This part of the vitamin B complex is known as the rat antidermatitis or rat antiacrodynia factor because rats that do not get enough of it in their diet develop skin diseases.

Science News Letter, April 22, 1939



DAWN OF THE NORTH

That is the English meaning of the name, Aurora Borealis. There have been some fine displays of these weird, flaring electrical discharges in the upper air during the past few months. It is to be doubted, however, if a better camera recording has been made recently in the United States than this picture by R. A. Seymour of Newberry, Mich.

MEDICINE

Migraine Headaches Stopped By Breathing Pure Oxygen

Mayo Clinic Tries Method Devised by Layman for the Relief of a Relative; Fails on Non-Migraine Aches

OXYGEN tanks and gas masks are coming to the rescue of migraine headache sufferers.

Breathing pure oxygen brings prompt relief from these prostrating headaches, for which no generally satisfactory treatment has yet been found, Dr. Walter C. Alvarez of the Mayo Clinic announces.

The idea of using oxygen came from a layman, Charles E. Rhein of the Linde Air Products Company. For two years, Mr. Rhein told the Mayo Clinic physicians, he had been checking the severe migraine attacks of one of his relatives by having her breathe pure oxygen. She was a patient whom Dr. Alvarez had previously been unable to help by any known form of treatment.

Using the mask devised by Drs. Walter Boothby, W. Randolph Lovelace and A.

L. Bulbulian of the Mayo Clinic, which is now being installed on transport planes for use at high altitudes, Dr. Alvarez tried oxygen inhalations for other migraine patients.

In one case inhalation of oxygen for one hour brought prompt relief. Another patient who had had frequent migraine attacks for years has not had a bad headache since she has started breathing oxygen at the beginning of a spell.

Headaches which are not typically migrainous, however, are not helped.

Cost of the treatment after initial expense of the inhalation apparatus is not much and with the Boothby-Lovelace-Bulbulian mask patients can talk, and if not too badly prostrated, can sit up and read or do some work.

Science News Letter, April 22, 1939

PSYCHOLOGY

Propaganda Found Necessary In Fight Against Prejudice

AT THE scientist who attempts to apply his science not only to material things but to the relations between people and nations, there is often flung the charge that it is not within the province of the scientist to deal with general values and judgment of those values. Some such criticisms come from

those who do not want to be bothered by rational and scientific facts. In others, the desire for such diffidence and detachment is, as the late Dr. William Alanson White observed psychiatrically, frequently a mask for fantasies of omnipotence and omniscience.

A group of psychiatrists have been giving expression to values and techniques of thinking as they impinge upon present day relationship between persons as individuals or as groups. Some readers of this quarterly, "Psychiatry", charge that the journal is engaged in propaganda or has mixed politics and psychiatry.

Because this conflict of opinion is by no means confined to either the limited field of psychiatry or the broad field of science, the following excerpted statements are good medicine for a mentally disturbed world:

"No science of inter-personal relations can ignore such dynamic factors as striv-

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ings towards truth, beauty, and humanity. Neither can any psychiatrist avoid manifesting valuing judgments in his participant observation of his patients. He strives towards objective evaluating, as contrasted with the conventional unnoticed acting out of irrational prejudice.

"Propaganda is a powerful force in modern life; all the more powerful because people are so generally ignorant of its techniques. The psychiatrist has to avoid the influence of pervasive propaganda and to remedy its more pernicious effects on his patients. He must therefore understand propaganda processes. Also, in so far as the psychiatrist is interested in hygienic reform, he must know how to make effective benevolent propaganda as a necessary preliminary to the spread of national enlightenment. If he cannot do this, he is impotent to deal with entrenched prejudice."

Science News Letter, April 22, 1939

METEOROLOGY

Rain in the Desert Makes Dry Washes Raging Streams

See Front Cover

RAIN in the desert impedes travel but rewards the tourist for his wait by unforgettable beauty.

The photograph of this sight which appears on the front cover of this week's SCIENCE NEWS LETTER is from the new book *Water—Wealth or Waste* by William Clayton Pryor and Helen Sloman Pryor (Harcourt, Brace).

Science News Letter, April 22, 1939

"There never was a time when archaeology was so immediately useful to the student of the Bible as now," declares Prof. W. F. Albright of the Johns Hopkins University, commenting on discoveries regarding long-lost Canaanite culture.

Queen Elizabeth's court physician is credited with writing the first book exclusively about dogs.

● R A D I O

Dr. Peter C. Goldmark, director of the CBS television programs, will be the guest scientist on "Adventures in Science" with Watson Davis, Director, Science Service, over the coast to coast network of the Columbia Broadcasting System, Monday, May 1, 4:45 EST, 5:45 EDST, 3:45 CST, 2:45 MST, 1:45 PST. Listen in on your local station. Listen in each Monday.

NEW BOOKS ON SCIENCE

Science News Letter presents a comprehensive list of scientific books published or to be published between January 1 and June 30, 1939. All information is believed to be correct but is not guaranteed. Prices are listed where known. Prices marked * are tentative.

Aeronautics

- ABC OF AVIATION, Rev. and enl.—V. W. Page—*Henley*, \$1.50.
 AIR WAR—W. O. D. Pearce—*Modern Age Books*, 50 c.
 THE AIRCRAFT CALENDAR—Eric Sargent, ed.—*Appleton*, \$2.50.
 AIRCRAFT DRAFTING MANUAL—James G. Thompson—*Aviation Press*, \$4*.
 AIRCRAFT ENGINES—D. J. Brimm, Jr., and H. E. Bogges—*Pitman*, \$2.50*.
 AIRPLANE DESIGN MANUAL—F. K. Teichmann—*Pitman*, \$4.75*.
 AIRPLANE MAINTENANCE—D. J. Brimm, Jr., and H. E. Bogges—*Pitman*, \$2.50*.
 THE BLUE BOOK OF PILOTING—John S. Kordak—*Ocean*, \$3.50.
 DICCIONARIO DE AERONAUTICA, Espanol-Engles, Engles-Espanol—Con Sus Definiciones—C. Thomas Reid—*Aviation Press*, \$3.
 ELEMENTS OF PRACTICAL AERODYNAMICS, 2nd ed.—Bradley Jones—*Wiley*.
 HEAD WIND: The Story of Robert Loraine—Winifred Loraine—*Morrow*, \$3.50.
 LIGHTPLANE FLYING—W. Langewiesche—*Pitman*, \$2.50*.
 PROCEDURE HANDBOOK FOR AIRCRAFT STRESS ANALYSIS—Willis L. Nye—*Aviation Press*, \$5*.
 THE STORY OF AIRCRAFT, 2nd ed.—Chelsea Fraser—*Crowell*, \$2.50.

Archaeology and Anthropology

- ANCIENT ANDEAN LIFE—Edgar L. Hewett—*Bobbs*, \$4.
 CULTURAL AND NATURAL AREAS OF NATIVE NORTH AMERICA—A. L. Kroeber—*U. Calif.*, \$3.50.
 CULTURE CONTACTS ON THE KANSU-TIBETAN BORDER—Robert B. Ekvall—*U. Chicago*, \$1.50.
 CYLINDER SEALS: A Documentary Essay on the Art and Religion of the Ancient Near East—H. Frankfort—*Macmillan*, \$14.
 THE DISCOVERY OF MAN—Stanley Casson—*Simon & Schuster*, \$3.75.
 EARLY EMPIRES OF CENTRAL ASIA—William M. McGovern—*U. N. Car.*, \$4.
 EARLY POTTERY OF THE JEBELEH REGION—Ann Marie Hoskin Ehrich—*Amer. Philosophical Soc. and U. Penn.*, \$2.50.
 THE EXCAVATION OF MEDINET HABU. II. THE TEMPLES OF THE EIGHTEENTH DYNASTY (Oriental Inst. Pubs., Vol. XLI)—Uvo Hölscher—*U. Chicago*, \$22.
 FIGURINES FROM SELEUCIA ON THE TIGRIS—Wilhelmina van Ingen—*U. Mich.*, \$5.
 5,000 YEARS AGO—Ralph V. D. Magoffin—*Hale*, \$2.75.
 GLORIES OF THE MAYA—Thomas Gann—*Scribner*, \$7.50*.
 GYPSIES: Their Life and Their Customs—Martin Block—*Appleton*, \$3.50.
 HANDBOOK OF AMERICAN INDIAN LANGUAGES, Part 3—Franz Boas, ed.—*Augustin. History of Ancient Civilization*, 2 vols.—Albert A. Trever—*Harcourt*, Vol. 1 \$4.50, Vol. 2 \$5.50, set \$10.
 HUNTER OF THE CAVERNS—Harold O. Whitnall—*Crowell*, \$1.50.

- THE ICONOGRAPHY OF TIBETAN LAMAISM—Antoinette K. Gordon—*Columbia*, \$16.
 INDIAN OASIS—Janette Woodruff (as told to Cecil Dryden)—*Caxton*, \$3.
 KHORSABAD. II. THE CITADEL AND THE TOWN (Oriental Inst. Pubs., Vol. XL)—Gordon Loud and Charles B. Altman—*U. Chicago*, \$30.
 THE KURRAH PAPYRI FROM APHRODITO IN THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE (Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization, 15)—Nabia Abbott—*U. Chicago*, \$1.50.
 THE LAST OF THE SERIS—Dane and Mary E. B. R. S. Coolidge—*Dutton*, \$2.50.
 MEGIDDO: STRATA I-5—Robert S. Lamon and Geoffrey M. Shipton—*U. Chicago*, \$20.
 THE MENOMINI INDIANS OF WISCONSIN—Felix M. Keesing—*Amer. Philosophical Soc. and U. Penn.*, \$2.50.
 MONUMENTAL ART OF NORTHERN EUROPE FROM THE STONE AGE: I. The Norwegian Localities—Gustaf Hallström—*Stechert*, \$15.
 PLAINS INDIAN PAINTING—John C. Ewers—*Stanford*, \$4.50, educational ed. \$3.
 POPULATION, RACE AND EUGENICS—Morris Siegel—*Pub. by author*, \$3.
 PRACTICAL ANTHROPOOMETRY—Ales Hrdlicka—*Wistar*, \$3.50.
 PREHISTORIC MACEDONIA—W. A. Heurtley—*Cambridge (Macmillan)*, \$20*.
 PREHISTORIC SURVEY OF EGYPT AND WESTERN ASIA. IV. PALEOLITHIC MAN AND THE NILE VALLEY IN LOWER EGYPT, WITH SOME NOTES UPON A PART OF THE RED SEA LITTORAL. A STUDY OF THE REGIONS DURING PLIOCENE AND PLEISTOCENE TIMES (Oriental Inst. Pubs., Vol. XLVI)—K. S. Sandford and W. J. Arkell—*U. Chicago*, \$8.
 THE PREHISTORY OF UGANDA PROTECTORATE—T. P. O'Brien—*Cambridge (Macmillan)*, \$7.50*.
 PUEBLO INDIAN RELIGION, 2 vols.—Elsie Clews Parsons—*U. Chicago*, \$7.
 RACE AGAINST MAN—Herbert J. Seligmann—*Putnam*, \$2.75.
 THE RACES OF EUROPE—Carleton Stevens Coon—*Macmillan*, \$5.75*.
 ST. DENIS: A FRENCH-CANADIAN PARISH—Horace Mitchell Miner—*U. Chicago*, \$3.
 SCULPTURE OF THE THIRD MILLENNUM B. C. FROM TELL ASMAR AND KHAFAJAH (Oriental Inst. Pubs., Vol. XLIV)—Henri Frankfort—*U. Chicago*, \$12.
 SO LIVE THE WORKS OF MEN (Seventieth Anniversary Volume Honoring Edgar Lee Hewett)—Donald D. Brand and Fred E. Harvey, eds.—*U. N. Mex.*, \$10.
 THE SWAZI—Brian Allen Marwick—*Cambridge (Macmillan)*, \$6*.
 RELIGION IN PRIMITIVE SOCIETY—W. D. Wallis—*Crofts*.

Astronomy

- ASTRONOMY—Wm. T. Skilling and R. S. Richardson—*Holt*.
 THE BRUCE PROPER MOTION SURVEY: I, First Report; II, A Catalogue of 2,350 Variable Stars Found with the Blink Microscope—W. J. Luyten—*U. Minn.*, 50 c. ea.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF STELLAR STRUCTURE—S. Chandrasekhar—*U. Chicago*, \$10.

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Biology

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BIOLOGY FOR PHARMACEUTICAL STUDENTS—Maughan and Bockley—*Williams & Wilkins*, \$6.50.

BIOLOGY OF BACTERIA, 2nd ed.—Arthur L. Henrici—*Heath*, \$3.60.

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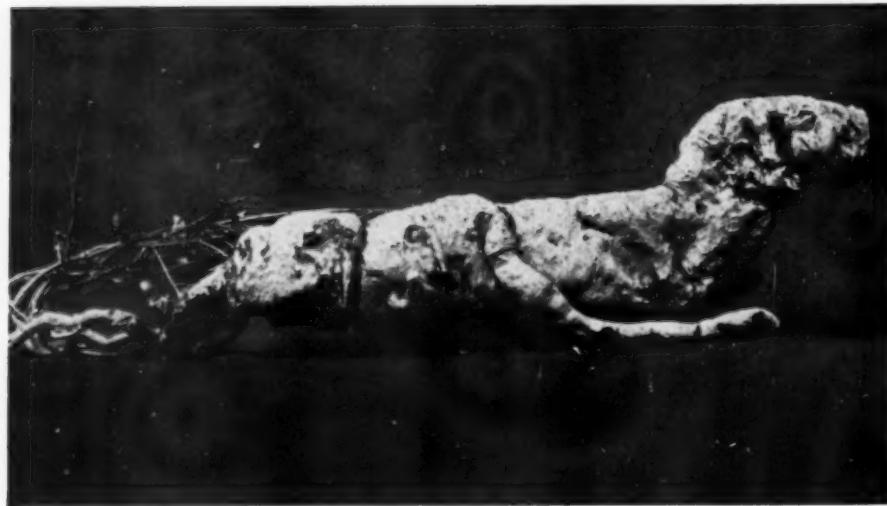
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MEDICINE

Major Scourge

• "Malaria is one of the most important diseases of man. Only a few years ago Manson remarked that malaria causes more deaths, and more predisposition to death by inducing cachectic states predisposing to other affections, than all the parasites affecting mankind together. Another great scientist, Osler, referred to malaria as the greatest single destroyer of the human race. Today, with all the accumulated information as to its etiology, treatment and prevention, malaria remains a major scourge, exceeding all other diseases in reducing the vitality, and in impeding the industrial development and political progress of the inhabitants of many tropical and subtropical countries." — James Stevens Simmons and others in *MALARIA IN PANAMA* (*Johns Hopkins Press*).

Science News Letter, April 22, 1939

PHYSICS

Want To Reduce?

• "The variations of gravity at different places on the earth's surface are so small that they are neglected in ordinary affairs; but if one could go to the moon, his weight would be about one-sixth that on the earth. A bantam athlete weighing 100 lb. here would weigh only 15 lb. on the moon, and he could do a high jump of 36 ft. On the sun he would weigh more than a ton; on the planet Jupiter, a paltry 260 lb. If our bantam athlete should visit the smallest asteroid (or small planet) yet discovered, he would be able to jump over a skyscraper with the greatest of ease!" — Oswald H. Blackwood in *INTRODUCTORY COLLEGE PHYSICS* (*Wiley*).

Science News Letter, April 22, 1939

ENGINEERING

Not Practical

• "Powers of nature such as solar heat and the energy of the tides have been explored, but they require large outlay for plant, they are necessarily restricted as to area, and are intermittent in action, so that they could not become more than ancillary to, say, a grid system. The production of electrical energy from light by the selenium cell is still further in the background and suffers from the same drawbacks. The pro-

HORSES SAY:

posal to get heat from the interior of the earth, to details of which Sir Charles Parsons gave close attention in 1904, has hardly been pushed far enough for an opinion to be formed as to its practicability. As long as our fossil fuel lasts, these latter expedients will not engage concentrated attention, but when the fuel is gone they will come again to the front."—H. W. Dickinson in *A SHORT HISTORY OF THE STEAM ENGINE*. Cambridge (Macmillan).

Science News Letter, April 22, 1939

BIOLOGY

Seaside Life

• "While the visitor is puzzling over his first sea anemone, a score of crabs may scurry away at his footfall or may rear up and offer battle in defense of life and liberty. When he turns to watch the crabs he may see a bed of urchins, their bristling spines half concealed by bits of seaweed and shell. He may stoop to pick up a snail, only to have the creature roll from the rock at the approach of his hand, tumble into a pool, and scramble away at a very unsnailike pace. He hears scraping sounds and clicks and bubblings, perhaps sharp cracks like tiny pistol shots. Jets of water shoot up. Everywhere there is color, life, movement."—Edwards F. Ricketts and Jack Calvin in *BETWEEN PACIFIC TIDES* (Stanford).

Science News Letter, April 22, 1939

HEREDITY

Improving Humans

• "No radical change in the genetic make-up of human beings can be expected for a long, long time. Nor are we justified, with what little we now know about our genes and their workings, and with our uncertain and short-sighted viewpoint, to plan any drastic change. We can and should try to root out the most serious of the 'black' genes which do not appear to have a single point in their favor; we can and should restrain reproduction of individuals who at any stage of civilization would be considered undesirable; and we can and should encourage propagation among all peoples, who by every broad rule of human existence can be considered fit and desirable."—Amram Scheinfeld in *YOU AND HEREDITY* (Stokes).

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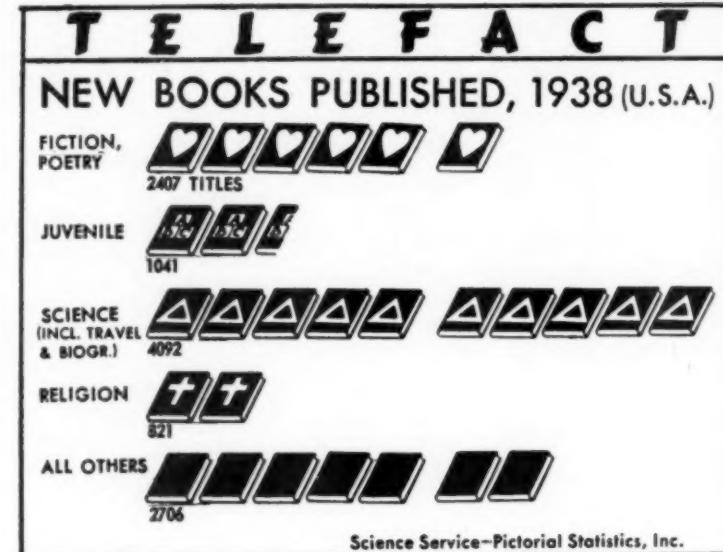
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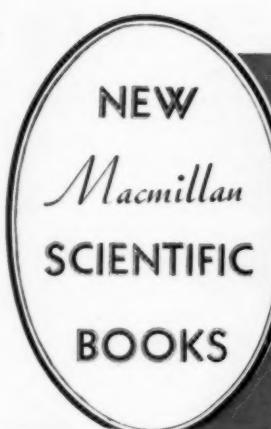
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